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*Home Mission Preaching in relation to the
Sacramental System of the Church.*

DOES
DEFECTIVENESS OF DOCTRINE
CONDUCE TO
THE SUCCESS OF MISSIONS?

A Third Address

ON

HOME MISSION WORK,

BY

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LONDON:
WELLS GARDNER, DARTON & CO., 2, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS.

Price Sixpence.

Lately Published. Price 6d.

THE NECESSITY OF PERSONAL TESTIMONY IN SEEKING
THE CONVERSION OF THE UNGODLY, and A PLEA FOR OPEN
PRAYER MEETINGS. Two addresses, delivered April 17
and May 3, 1882. By the Rev. W. ALLEN WHITWORTH, M.A.

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HOME MISSION PREACHING

IN RELATION TO THE

SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM OF THE CHURCH.*

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I LATELY heard it alleged that Mission Preaching in England seemed to be successful in proportion to its doctrinal defectiveness. In particular, it was said, the mission preacher to a great extent ignores the sacramental teaching of the Church and prevails with the masses in proportion as he ignores it.

This is a very serious allegation, and if it were true it would seem to imply that the sacramental teaching of the Church does not stand the test of potency in its application to the needs of men.

At the same time we are reminded that the teaching of evangelists in Apostolic days was potent and was certainly sacramental. The apostles put Baptism into the forefront of their teaching, and their missions were successful to an extent unparalleled in our modern experience. We are constantly reminded that when Philip the Deacon “preached Jesus” his convert’s first remark was, “What doth hinder me to be baptized?” When the apostles were asked, “Men and Brethren, what shall we do?” the answer was, “Repent and

* Delivered before a meeting of a Men’s Guild, in the parish of St John’s, Hammersmith, November 9, 1882.

be baptized." When the gaoler at Philippi asked, "What must I do to be saved?" the answer was, "Believe," but the Belief was testified by his being immediately baptized with his whole house.

It is my present purpose to examine the statement that Mission Preaching is most successful when Baptism and other sacraments are ignored. I hope that, while I disprove this allegation, I shall be able to reconcile the course pursued by the modern missionary with that which the apostolic evangelists followed.

Much confusion of thought has arisen from the incorrect way in which the word "Heathen" is commonly used. We read about the heathen in our great cities, about missions to the heathen in our own parishes, and so on. What is meant is that there are people as ignorant of God's true revelation as any heathen could be, and that there are people as deeply sunk in vice as though they were heathen. But they are not heathens.

Heathens are the adherents of a false religion, which they are called to give up in favour of Christianity. Heathens are, at least, those who are alien to Christianity, and are making an entirely new profession in accepting the name of Christian.

Baptized people may be very bad Christians, but they are certainly not heathens.

Now the great mass of our people have been baptized. In the last census year (1881) for every 100 births in this parish we had 77 baptisms in Church.* The Romans and Protestant dissenters must have baptized a good many of the remaining 23 per cent. Only a small proportion of the population can therefore be unbaptized.

We have not, therefore, in preaching to the ungodly and unconverted to bid them embrace Christianity and enter the Church

* The population of the district by the census of 1881 was 14,359. The London Birth-rate is 36·5. This gives 514 as the number of births in the year. The number of Baptisms was 399, or 77·6 per cent. of the births.

by being baptized. Baptism does not stand before them as it stood before those to whom St Peter, St Philip, and St-Paul preached. It is not to be presented to them as it must still be presented to the African Savage, or to the civilized Hindu. To these we have still to hold up the faith of Jesus as a Truth to accept, and the Church of Jesus as a Society to join. We have to bid them confess the faith, and join the Church—through the gate of Baptism.

But the multitudes whom we address at the street corner are in a totally different position. Presumably, they have been made partakers of the Covenant, which God makes with us through Christ. They may be without faith; but if they contemplate the idea (as they probably do) of accepting some faith before they die, there is no thought of its being any other than the faith of Christ. If they are in any sense inquiring or hesitating as to what religious body they should join, it is not a question between Christianity and some anti-Christian system, but between one form of Christianity and another. I did indeed, a few weeks since, meet with a parishioner who said, he thought Buddhism as good a religion as Christianity, but I found that he could not tell me one single tenet of Buddhism. His statement was probably only a mode of expressing the common opinion that all religions contain some truth, and that all, as we find them now, are mingled with some error. But this man sends his children to Church; and if the prospect of death, or anything else, were to fill him with anxiety about a future state, he would certainly not enquire for a Buddhist teacher, but would probably send for his parish priest.

If a man is a Christian only in name it is something. It practically means that there is a huge probability that if he comes to seek God, it will be the God of the Christian revelation.

The Christian preacher in England cannot say to the multitudes, Repent and be baptised, because the great majority of them are baptised. And to say, Repent, and if you have not been baptised, be baptised—or at least to make this treatment

of an exceptional case the burden of one's preaching, would betray a want of the sense of proportion, which to many hearers would seem ludicrous.

Of course we ascertain in the course of subsequent instruction, or conference, whether the new convert has been baptised or not, and if he has not he is immediately prepared for that Sacrament.

But the Mission preacher speaks, and must speak, in England with the consciousness that his audience are for the most part baptised. They are already the children of God and Holy Church—but lost sons for whom the heart of Mother Church anxiously yearns. In heathen lands the Church may go (as it were) to find the native ore, out of which to coin the piece of money upon which the King's face is to be stamped. But here in England she is searching not for uncoined metal, but like the woman in the parable, for the piece that she has lost—the piece that has come from the King's mint and been stamped once with the King's mark; but the piece, which, alas, by her want of care SHE HAS LOST.

But those who charge the Missioner with neglecting sacramental teaching would probably argue, that if he is preaching to those who have been baptised, but have neglected their baptismal grace, he ought to be constantly reminding them of the fact of their baptism.

Now I say that implicitly he does this, but to do it explicitly would be to use words without profit.

He does it implicitly when he assures his hearers that the Holy Ghost is given to them with prevenient grace to enable them to respond to the gospel call. He does it implicitly when he appeals to them by their experience of the inward pleadings of the Holy Ghost; and when he reminds them that they have not to wait for God to convert them, but that God has long been waiting for them to be converted.

He may also occasionally assert that their Baptism is a pledge to them of this. But to press this point very much would be vain, for manifestly it only has its force on the

assumption (which is little warranted) that the hearer has clearly grasped the meaning and significance of baptism.

Moreover, however great may be the comfort that the faithful and devout child of God may derive from meditating on the fact of his baptism, seeing in that fact the assurance that the Holy Spirit will ever afford him the grace that is sufficient for him, we must remember that the contemplation of the same fact is only depressing to the man who has constantly resisted the Holy Spirit's influence. The sense that baptismal grace has not availed to keep him holy in the past may indeed conduce to a wholesome conviction of sin, but it does not afford any warrant to the man for supposing that he will succeed better for the future. The reflection does not inspire hope, and, as a rule, those to whom we appeal must be "saved by hope." The very same truth which may be powerful to sustain the man after his conversion is not necessarily the truth which will have the most effect in leading him to conversion. Let us remember the distinction which St Paul draws between the means of convincing the unbeliever, and the means of edifying the faithful. "Tongues are for a sign not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe." (1 Cor. xiv. 22.)

I presume that there is no one who would say that the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist ought to have any prominent place in Mission preaching. And, therefore, I suppose that the charge against the popular Missioner of ignoring sacramental teaching is not to be understood as applying to the Sacrament of the Altar.

Yet there are two uses which the Missioner must make, and constantly does make, of the doctrine of this Sacrament.

Firstly, it is generally useless to speak to people about their neglect of public worship, except with reference to attendance at the Sacrament. The man who neglects his Church has usually persuaded himself that his prayers at home are as efficacious as any prayers in Church, and that the books he reads

at home are as good as any sermon. It is very seldom worth while to dispute this position. It is generally wiser to rise at once to Christ's institution of the Divine Service. The man may say his prayers, and read his books at home, but at home he cannot obey his Lord's very plain command, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Secondly, the Mission preacher will appeal to the obligation of Communion, in dealing with the very numerous class of people who are satisfying themselves with half-a-religion. Fitness for Communion is the test of fitness for heaven. The Missioner will speak of the Lord's Supper as an anticipation of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. He will shew that our preparation for the Sacrament is a rehearsal of our preparation for that heavenly feast, of which it is said, "Blessed are they which are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb." He will convict those who declare themselves unworthy of Communion by asking the question: If you are unfit to draw near to Christ, sacramentally present upon the Altar, can you be fit to stand before Him, sitting for judgment on the great white throne?

Yet in Mission preaching this Blessed Sacrament can only be spoken of as something to be looked forward to, and to be approached at what will seem for the moment to be a remote future. The unconverted man must be first converted, and then he must generally go through a course of instruction before he may come to the Altar. We are preaching for conversion, and no reverent Churchman will say that a hurried Communion is to be pressed upon those whom we address.

And Confirmation, like Holy Communion, is one of the "Sacraments for the living,"* and cannot reasonably be

* I use the word Sacrament here in its wider sense. I do not ignore the distinction between the two Sacraments of the Gospel and those five sacred rites which according to the Prayer Book are "commonly called Sacraments." But there is no other word by which we can speak collectively of all the sacred ordinances in which the Church professes to be ministering a gift from God to her children. Baptism and Absolution are said to be

brought into much prominence in preaching to souls who are dead in sin. It is neither ignored nor neglected by the Mission preacher, whose first care it is, when the hitherto godless man has come in penitence to Christ, to direct him to seek instruction, that at the first opportunity he may receive Confirmation.

The only sacramental rite which remains on which to base the allegation that sacramental truth is neglected in mission preaching is Confession, or the "Sacrament of Penance." This, like Baptism, is defined to be a Sacrament for the dead, through which they are to pass into the life of grace; and for those who having once been baptized have fallen away from grace—for those therefore to whom our mission preaching is directed—it is the Sacrament of Restoration. Baptism is past and cannot be repeated. Confirmation and Holy Communion can only be approached after a preparation that will necessarily occupy time. If conversion is to be accompanied by any sacramental act, it must be by absolution; the Sacrament of conversion must be the Sacrament of Penance.

The charge then made against the Mission preacher of neglecting the Sacraments reduces itself to this single item, that the necessity of sacramental Confession and Absolution are not sufficiently pressed. It is objected that we say, *Look to the Cross, i.e.*, by an effort of faith, and *Come to the Cross, i.e.*, by a surrender of the will, when it is asserted we ought rather to say Come to the Cross in Confession and Look to the Cross in receiving Absolution.

A special objection has been raised to that hymn which alludes to the history of the Brazen Serpent, and calls on the sinner to Look and live,—the Brazen Serpent, whose lifting up Christ himself declared to be a type of His own crucifixion.

Sacraments "for the dead," and all others are Sacraments "for the living," because people receive Baptism or Absolution for the remission of sins, but they are not fit for any other Sacrament except when their sins are already forgiven.

There is life for a look at the Crucified One,
 There is life at this moment for thee ;
 Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
 Unto Him who was nailed to the tree.
 Look ! look ! look, and live !
 There is life for a look at the Crucified One,
 There is life at this moment for thee.

It has been said that here we are wrong in offering people the instantaneous gift of spiritual life, when, in truth, repentance is necessary, and a perfect repentance involves penitential duties which must occupy time. It is alleged that sacramental Confession is the only appointed means by which we are made sure of the forgiveness of deadly sin, or that there are some at least for whom it is necessary ; but this truth (it is said) is utterly ignored in the hymn, which rather implies that anyone or everyone may have forgiveness at once upon "looking" to the Cross of Christ.

Now, although I cannot assent to the proposition (which seems to me to belong to Roman rather than to Catholic or Anglican theology) that sacramental Confession is necessary for all who have fallen into deadly sin after baptism, yet I am ready to admit that there are many for whom it is practically necessary. But I assert that there is nothing to contradict this, either in ordinary Mission preaching, or in the language of the hymn which has been quoted.

For what is meant by that look which is said to give life to the soul ?

To look to Jesus on the Cross is to make that supreme act of faith by which the soul recognizes the truth that He has died for us. To look to Jesus is to see the love of Jesus, and he that thus looks at Jesus cannot stay with a look, he comes to Jesus, loving the Saviour, for the Saviour's love to him. Thus the look to Jesus implies the devotion of self to Jesus, it necessarily entails that submission of the will to the will of God, which is meant when we speak of *coming to God*.

I cannot understand anything else by "coming to God," than the simple acceptance of all that God is going to bid us do. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* is the cry of the soul that comes to God. And the "look" comprehends all this. It may all be done in a moment,—not carried out and executed in a moment, but done in a moment as far as regards purpose and intention. And this, surely, is what God regards. The same God who declares us to be born in sin, and the children of His wrath, (because He sees in us, even as unconscious infants, the seed of sinfulness which must necessarily grow up into actual sin, unless His grace intervene to check the noisome growth)—the same God who ever sees the future in the present, the effect in the cause, and the action in the motive—that same God can judge THE LOOK with which the penitent regards the Saviour, He can see in it the willingness to pursue the path of penitence to take up the Cross, to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Yes, He can see latent in the "look" of the soul to Christ all the actual discipline of penitence that is to follow, all the deepening of the sorrow for sin, all the prayer and fasting by which evil shall be overcome, all that is to be done in travelling the purgative way.

So that even if we were to take the same view of the necessity of the Sacrament of Penance which Romans are supposed to take, we should still call upon people to look instantaneously to the Cross of Christ, to look with a gaze of devotion that should potentially carry with it all the after-work of penitence, assuring them that the God who anticipates our prayers, and prepares the answer before we call, would indeed give them the new germ of spiritual life, and impart to them on the instant that which should be in them a fountain of living water springing up unto eternal life.

There is life for a look at the Crucified One

There is life at this moment for thee.

To preach sacramental Confession as the *seal* of conversion is well; but to preach it as the *instrument* of conversion is, I

believe, a most pernicious mistake. It must not be forgotten that this sacred rite can bring no grace unless it be approached with a right disposition. To preach to the unconverted masses and tell them that if they will go to Confession they will receive pardon for their sins, *ex opere operato*, is indeed a damnable heresy. If they could believe such teaching, they would be tempted, in a formal and mechanical way, to use Confession as a charm, in the vain idea that it would commend them to God without a true repentance.

Every thing has its due place, and the object of Mission preaching is not to bring people directly to Sacraments, but to bring them to the right disposition to receive the Sacraments. You may be sure that as soon as the disposition is right, they will be willing and anxious to claim the higher privileges which shall then be set before them. Convert the man, and he will be glad enough to set the Sacramental seal to his conversion. Let him look to the Cross in loving faith, let him come to Jesus in loving obedience, and all the rest will follow in due course.

Allowing for the difference of circumstances, remembering that we are preaching not to the heathen, but to the baptised, our Mission preaching will be seen to be as sacramental as was that of St Paul or St John.

The allegation that Mission preaching is successful in proportion as it is doctrinally defective, seems to resolve itself into this, that preaching must be successful in proportion as the preacher rightly divides the word of truth, in proportion as he knows how to bring forth milk for babes, and strong meat for them that are of full age in spiritual experience.

I think I have now succeeded in justifying the course adopted by Mission preachers who themselves hold the doctrine of the Church in all its fulness. But the inquiry will not be complete until we have considered the alleged successes in Mission work of preachers whose own apprehension of doctrinal truth is (from our point of view) defective, and who labour on other lines than those of the Church of England.

The Mission preaching of Messrs. Moody and Sankey in 1875, and the work of the Salvation Army at the present time, afford the most striking instances of real or apparent success resulting from the preaching of an exceedingly deficient doctrine.

That the teaching of the Salvation Army is doctrinally defective, will hardly be denied even by themselves. It is rather their boast. Their "General" declares, in the *Contemporary Review*,* that he teaches his people "to avoid as the very poison of hell all controverted questions." Unless it be maintained that no controversy has arisen concerning any portion of the doctrine of Christ, this must be regarded as the deliberate assumption of a position doctrinally defective. It means at least that from the General's own point of view, it is not necessary to maintain the faith beyond the limits of that which he believes who believes the least.

Doubtless this tends to the popularity of the movement.

The Cross of Christ was to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. But if you eliminate from the gospel all that is a stumbling block to one or that is foolishness to another, it follows that the residuum will be, as far as it goes, acceptable and popular. It does not follow that it will be a Power nor an embodiment of Wisdom. It was expressly that, which was to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness, which was declared to be, to those that believed, the Power of God and the Wisdom of God.

From the time of our Lord's earthly ministry, His doctrine has given offence. When He uttered those mysterious sayings which found their explication in the institution of the Holy Eucharist, we are told that from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. "This is a hard saying who can hear it?" was the excuse they gave for turning aside.

A gospel without any controverted doctrines is not likely to give offence. It carries favour and finds it. Undenominational religion is naturally popular, but whether such an emasculated

* August 1882.

faith can give the victory which overcometh the world, is another question.

I see in this avoidance of doctrine which could give offence one of the elements of the popularity of the Salvation Army, but not an element of its strength. We shall presently find its strength not in the negation of doctrine, but in some controverted doctrines which, in spite of its disclaimer of controversy, it tenaciously insists upon.

Evangelists of the type of Messrs. Moody and Sankey avoid controverted doctrines at least as carefully as the Salvation Army. And they have found the same favour with the people. But their teaching, though popular, has proved weak. I suppose there never was Mission preaching which presented such a show of immediate success, and yet proved so barren of permanent result, as that of Messrs. Moody and Sankey. Crowds flocked to hear them, multitudes were impressed, and yet the towns which had given them tens of thousands of hearers could produce in twelve months' time no evidence whatever of permanent result. With the Salvation Army it is different. Wherever they have been at work, people who utterly disagree with them and disapprove of their methods bear witness to a certain good they have done. Drunkards have been reformed; the lowest and most degraded have been brought to some sort of faith in Christ, a faith which has had a practical effect upon their lives; but we hear no such testimony in favour of the ordinary undenominational Mission preaching which is vague and neutral in doctrine. I conclude, therefore, that though the avoidance of unpopular doctrine tends to make the preacher acceptable, it does not tend to make his work permanently effective, but rather the reverse.

It is perhaps too soon to speak of the work of the Salvation Army as permanently effective; still they appear to have a certain number of converts of many years' standing.

Personally, I believe that the harm and mischief they have done very far outweighs any good they have achieved. The

movement upon the whole, in its general effects, I believe to be injurious to the cause of true religion. Nevertheless, looking at the good apart from the evil we must attribute to them a certain success, which in many cases appears to be of a permanent character. It belongs to our present enquiry to ask to what extent this success is the result of the doctrinal position of the Army. Is it to be cited as an example of success attending defectiveness of doctrine, or can we trace any other connection between the teaching of the Army and its effects?

You observe that it would be foreign to our subject to consider the methods of the Army or its organizations. We are only concerned with the question, How far is its success due to its doctrine?

A certain difficulty attends any investigation of the doctrine of the Army from the fact that they have no creeds or symbols of faith. Their teaching to-day need not be what it was a year ago; and in fact while they have recently executed a change of front in their disposition towards the Church, so there seem to have been changes in the manner in which they have put forward certain doctrines.

My estimate of their teaching is founded (1) on General Booth's own statement in the *Contemporary Review*, (2) on what I have read in their Manual and in their weekly papers, (3) on what I have heard myself at their ordinary meetings here in Hammersmith, and (4) on what I have learned in conversation with members of their body.

Now, although they profess to avoid controverted doctrines, it must not be supposed that their doctrinal position is either neutral or negative. The controverted doctrines which they avoid are those on which popular feeling runs high; they keep clear of dogmatic statements which would provoke popular opposition. But there are certain positive doctrines upon which they vehemently insist, and herein, as it seems to me, lies their strength. That is to say, as far as their success is connected with their doctrine, it is to be traced, not to their disregard of the

Sacraments, not to any other deficiencies in their teaching, but to the fact that they clearly teach certain dogmas which are either true or at least contain powerful elements of truth.

False doctrine, as such, will have no power for good. But a doctrine which is a distortion of the truth may have much power on account of the truth which it contains, and for a time an exaggeration of a truth may have more power even than the fair statement of the truth, if it be a truth which had been hitherto neglected or forgotten.

That man should be in this life sure that his sins are forgiven is a doctrine which has been very little insisted upon for the last few generations in the Church of England, though it is clearly the doctrine of the Prayer Book. In almost all the books of family prayer and books of private devotion written for Churchmen during the last half century (excluding those of the Catholic revival), I observe that persons are taught to use expressions which imply that they are habitually without the sense of pardon. Though our children have been taught to say that they were made in their baptism the inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, I am afraid a great majority of them have been brought up with the idea that it would be presumptuous for any ordinary Christian to say that he was sure his sins were forgiven—sure that if he died now he should be saved. Perhaps the misunderstanding of the word “miserable” in the Litany has conduced to the idea that we ought to be chronically unhappy, that at most a very saintly man may have a reasonable hope that he is reconciled to God.

I believe that no Mission preaching has been successful that has not preached very definitely, the doctrine that we may be and ought to be sure of the forgiveness of our sins. The Ranter may draw people to this assurance by methods that excite the emotions; the Catholic may be taught to find the same assurance sacramentally by Confession, but in one way or another the Mission preacher must proclaim and offer this assurance or he will preach very much in vain.

The Salvation Army preach it in terms which theologically are very objectionable, but in terms understood of the people. When a man rises from the penitent form, brushes away his tears, and declares "I am saved," the people understand that the Salvation Army profess at least to lead people to that sense of peace with God, without which the faith is no gospel.

This clear teaching of assurance seems to me to be one of the elements of strength in the work of the Salvation Army. And another element of strength is to be recognized in their teaching about sanctification. On both of these points their doctrine may be thought to be exaggerated, or even false, but it is certainly not defective.

About ten years ago I used to hear a good deal of street preaching, of which the burden seemed to be, Only believe and it matters little what your life may be. The preacher probably meant something better, but to the ordinary hearer he seemed to be preaching forgiveness of sin, without deliverance from sin: justification without sanctification: pardon without holiness.

This preaching was certainly doctrinally defective, but I never saw any sign that it was, even in a moderate degree, successful.

The Salvation Army have avoided this heresy, and by their fuller teaching they have prevailed. Whatever respect they have gained from the working classes, they have gained by their high standard of morality, in some respects seeming to verge even on asceticism. If they live up to the profession which they make, they must command the respect even of those who are most pained by their ignorant irreverence.

But we are told that in preaching sanctification they base their appeals upon errors of doctrine. Even so, these errors, being errors of excess not of defect, do not at all help the case of those who argue that missions are most successful where doctrine is defective. However, it seems to me that these very errors are exaggerations of facts, which are themselves of such

essential importance that it is better to have them exaggerated than to have them neglected.

I believe that ignorant people get a clearer view of the reality of pardon and the call of holiness from the exaggerated and concrete form in which these truths are taught them by the Salvationists, than they do from the inadequate treatment which such doctrines receive at the hands of many preachers; just as they acquire a truer idea of the grace of the Sacrament from the Roman exaggeration of Transubstantiation, than from the Puritan negations upon the subject. In fact, I think there is a close analogy between the manner in which the Romans have taught the doctrine of sacramental grace by crystallizing it into the most concrete form in the dogma of Transubstantiation, and the manner in which the Salvationists are teaching the assurance of pardon and the necessity of holiness by dogmatic exaggerations which, in their bald and unqualified simplicity, seem easier to understand than the well guarded statement of the truth itself. We cannot accord our approval to either, for we cannot allow that the end justifies the means, but we may perceive that in each case the power of the truth has been manifested, though disguised under the shell of exaggeration. These exaggerated dogmas are like the words of which Tennyson writes which

Half reveal

And half conceal the soul within.

The Salvationists teach, or they used to teach (for I fancy that the teaching at head quarters has been modified since the appearance of Canon Mason's article in the *Church Quarterly Review*) that after a man's conversion he may receive a second *afflatus* of the Holy Ghost, which shall sanctify him suddenly and perfectly. This is obtained instantaneously by an act of faith. God "purges the heart of the new convert from all its evil tendencies and desires, the moment the soul, longing for this perfect deliverance from sin, trusts Him for it all."

This obviously contradicts the statement of our IX Article :

yet with much that is erroneous it seems to embody some important principles which I proceed to enumerate.

1. It is true that sanctification is by faith, in the same sense that justification is by faith. Sanctification is indeed the work of the Holy Ghost, but He works in us according to our faith. The first thing necessary to induce a man to give up any sin, is to assure him that he can give it up. Three-fourths of the boys and young men who give way to sins of impurity, do so because they think they cannot help themselves. They think they *must*. Persuade the man that he can be holy—get him to say from his heart “I believe in the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me,” and he has already made the great step towards victory.

2. Though sanctification be the work of our whole lives—for as long as we live we are never perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus Christ—yet the man who has been the slave of sin has to break with his besetting sins by an act which may be—sometimes must be—sudden or instantaneous. We admit this when we tell the drunkard that he must not try to give up his drunken habits by degrees but must abstain altogether and at once. And if a man who has been living an evil life is truly converted and brought to see the love of God, and to feel that his sins are washed out in the precious blood of Jesus Christ—his newly begotten zeal and devotion for God will often carry him in a day or a week further in the path of sanctification than the patient labour of a year or even a life. There is therefore a sense in which, not absolutely but relatively, our sanctification is sudden and instantaneous.

3. And in the same sense, not absolutely but relatively, sanctification may be said to be perfect. The man who has long been the slave of some besetting sin has felt as if the conquest of that one sin would imply perfection. Not that that one is his only sin, but that the heinousness of that one seems to dwarf all the rest into nothingness. And when by the grace of God that one sin is conquered, the battle of his life is practically won. In a sense he may be said to be all at once perfect. If it be only a

figure of speech we must not condemn it, for an inspired apostle has used it. "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin," says St Peter. He that has learned to undergo that self-restraint and to exercise that self-conquest which suffering in the flesh implies—he has gained the day against the evil one, he has ceased from sin.

I do not wonder at the attraction of any preaching which proclaims to men a deliverance immediate and complete from the power of sin. As far as such doctrine is true, it must be potent indeed. The elements of falsehood in it—as for instance that there shall be no more inclination or propensity to evil—must in the long run be elements of weakness. The promise may be attractive, but disappointment must ensue when the promise is found unfulfilled. Still there is truth enough about the doctrine of sanctification, as preached by the Salvation Army, to account for the power which the Army seems to have exercised in winning souls from sin.

4. One other doctrine is practically taught by the Salvation Army which I imagine has contributed also to their success:—the doctrine of joy. They have taught, not so much by word as by their whole tone and bearing, that Religion makes them happy. I do not defend the comic aspect which they have sometimes given to their meetings. I abhor it. But you may be sure of this, that if you are to influence men to accept your faith, you must show them that your faith makes you happy and bright.

The Mission preaching of the Salvation Army seems to me to be not seriously defective, judged simply as Mission preaching. The grievous defectiveness is in their subsequent teaching. At one time they professed a readiness to do their work as missionaries and leave to the church (or, in their phraseology, the churches) the work of edifying and instructing those whom they were the means of converting. We convert a man, they said, and then we let him join what church he will. If that were their line still, we should not make complaint regarding their doctrinal posi-

tion. But the teaching which may be sufficient for the conversion of the sinner may be very inadequate for the edification of the faithful. And now, unfortunately, the Army has assumed a position of a sect in itself, with an independent life of its own. "Instead of insisting upon attendance at any church, even for the Sacrament, (says Mr Booth) we teach our people to spend all their leisure time with the Army, * * * * leaving to the churches all who wish mere church life."

If our Mission work is not to be all in vain, conversion must be followed up by careful teaching. And the fulness and completeness of this teaching will be the best safeguard against relapse. Nay, more, it will afford the best ground of hope of restoration even when a relapse has taken place. Given that a man lives a holy and religious life for a month and then falls away, the month that he has lived in faith and holiness is not altogether lost. It is something even in itself, and it is the basis on which to found the appeal to the Church at Ephesus, "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent." But the hope of restoration seems much greater if the brief period of faith and holiness was sanctified by sacramental grace. It seems as if some sort of indelible impression were made upon the soul by the right use of the Sacraments, so that the man who has once really lived a good and holy life in the power of sacramental grace, for however short a time, though he have subsequently fallen away from grace, has, humanly speaking, a better chance of restoration than any other; and if he be restored, it will almost certainly be to the full faith from which he had fallen. We have many instances among those whom we prepare for Confirmation. A young man who, having been rescued from a life of sin and vice, has followed the guidance of the Church in the discipline of Penitence, in Confirmation, and in Communion, may meet with some spiritual disappointment, falling back into some sin which he thought he had conquered for ever. Depressed by his failure, his faith yields; he thinks his religion is all in vain; he gives it up and abandons himself to the old

reckless life of sin. But he remembers from whence he is fallen. In the mercy of God, something happens sooner or later to give him the desire for better things; and then at once is perceived the difference between his case and the case of any other backslider who, though a Churchman, has never had experience of the full privileges of Holy Church. The latter, when he yearns for restoration, becomes an easy prey to revivalist, salvationist, or any other ignorant religionist; whilst he who had once found the reality of a spiritual life fortified by sacramental grace has no other thought than to return to the privileges he once enjoyed.

To sum up my whole paper:—I have tried in the first part to show that Mission preaching in the Church of England—and particularly as it is carried on in this parish—is not open to the charge of succeeding by the sacrifice of doctrinal truth, or by any defectiveness of doctrinal statement, more especially as regards the Sacraments. And in the second part I hope I have satisfied you respecting the most notable Mission preaching of recent days in England outside the order of the Church of England, that its success is not due to its defectiveness of doctrine, but rather the reverse; that while unfaithfulness in doctrine may have conciliated the people, a real power has only been exercised when doctrinal truths have been proclaimed with much definiteness and precision.

I hope I may be deemed to have proved my proposition, that there is no ground for the allegation that Mission preaching is successful in proportion as it is doctrinally defective.



MISSION WORK

IN THE PARISH OF

ST JOHN'S, HAMMERSMITH.

From the "WEST LONDON OBSERVER,"

October 7th, 1882.

Mission work appears to have become a special feature in the parish of St John's, Hammersmith. Open-air preaching and laymen's prayer meetings have been the order of the day for the last six months. Regularly on Sunday and Tuesday evenings a compact body of laymen may be seen issuing from the Vicarage in Oxford Road carrying as their Standard a large wooden cross. They advance in solemn procession singing popular hymns, and thus attract the attention of the passers-by, to whom they politely offer short tracts and invitations to the subsequent prayer meeting. At suitable places the procession halts, while the Vicar, or one of his colleagues, gives a short address, which is always listened to with respect and generally with marked interest. Then again the procession moves on, singing, until another suitable position is reached, when another address is given. We are told that there are usually five or six of these addresses, or little sermons at different stations every evening. After thus occupying an hour or more the mission procession reaches Holy Innocents' Church in Dalling Road. The Rev. C. F. Tobias is in charge of this church, and either he or the Vicar of the parish preaches a mission sermon, after which comes a prayer meeting. The characteristic of the prayer meeting which struck us most was that it was left as completely as possible in the hands of the lay-people. A pleasing feature in the meeting was the perfect equality of classes. One after another offered prayer without any preconcerted arrangement (we are told); some of the prayers being little more than a simple petition, and others occupying several minutes. We were informed that the rule of the meeting was, that prayers should occupy not more than one minute, and testimony not more than two minutes from each speaker. Testimony was explained to us to be evidence given by Christian men upon an assigned subject, not from books or study, but from their own experience. The subject upon which testimony was invited upon the occasion on which our report is based was "Influence: How have you been influenced by others for good, or how have you most successfully influenced others?" Several men spoke with much simplicity and natural earnestness on this subject. It is a satisfactory mark of our times that so much is now being done in home missionary work. No denomination has a monopoly of this work. The methods used by different Churches may be different, but all seem to be grasping the great principle that a Church which is not missionary is no Church at all. The Church of England in her several parishes, and the Salvation Army, with the whole world as a parish, are alike going out into the "highways and hedges" to compel the out-casts to come in. We wish them all God-speed.

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REV. W. ALLEN WHITWORTH, M.A.,

*Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge,
and Vicar of St John the Evangelist, Hammersmith.*

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